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ASTONISHING X-MEN®

JOSS WHEDON • JOHN CASSADAY

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SPLINTER IS UP FOR THRUST, YOUR COMMAND.

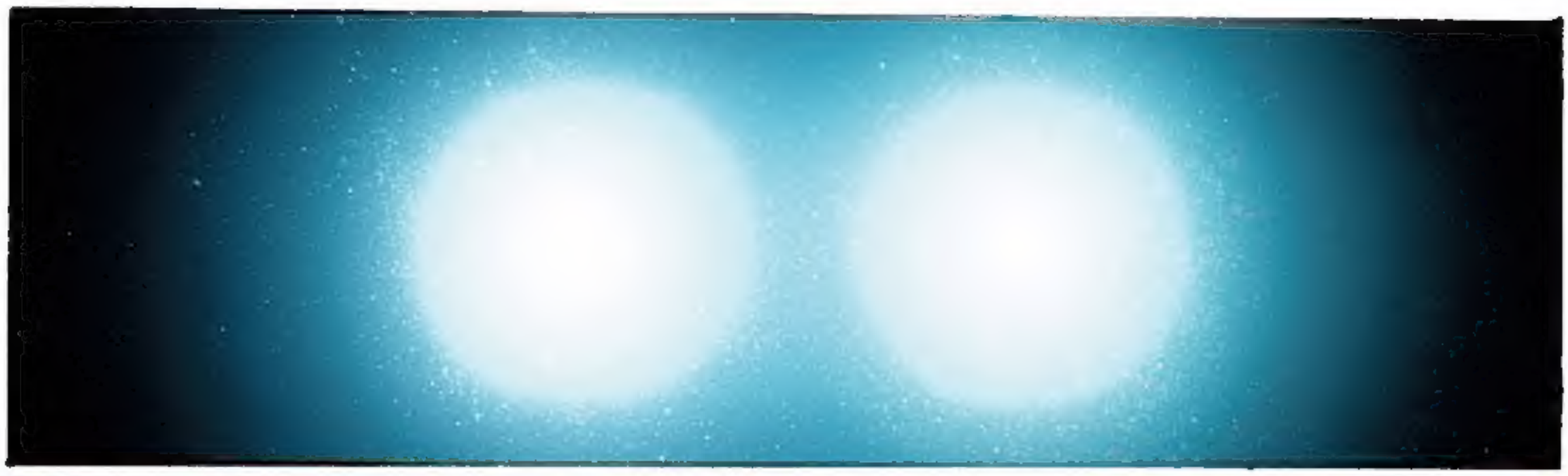
TIME TO THE BREAKWORLD?

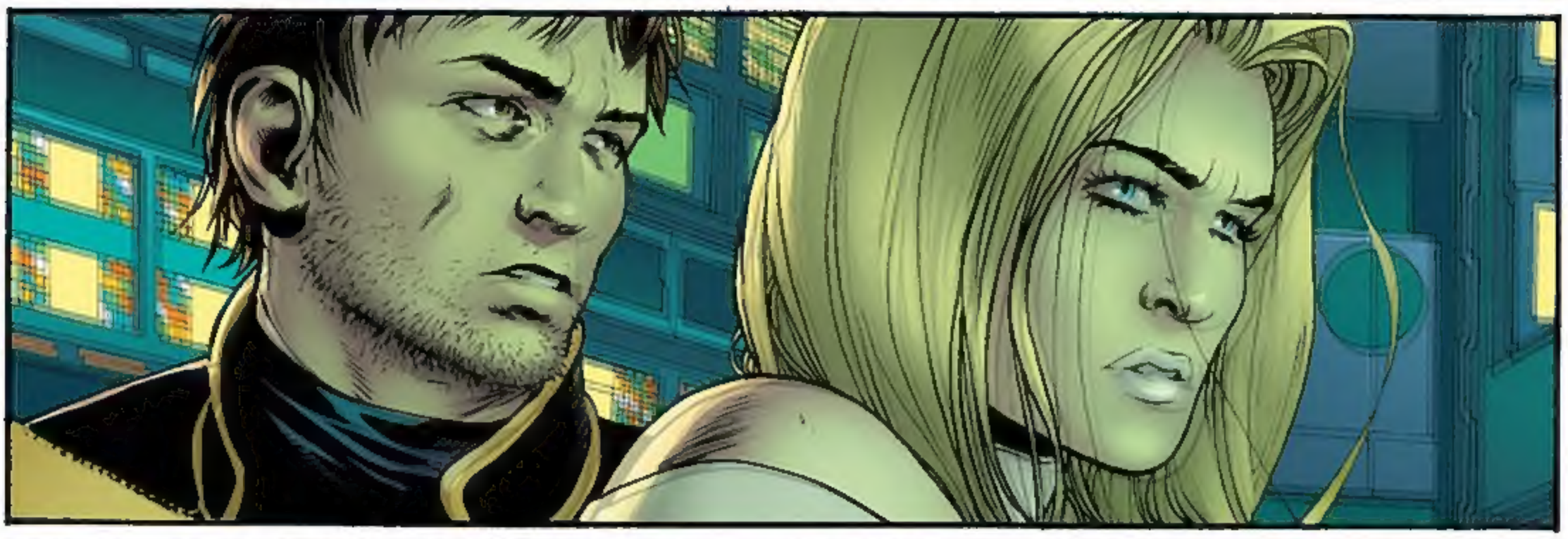
FOURTEEN MINUTES TO CLEAN ORBIT.

TIME TILL THE SHIP IS SHREDDED?

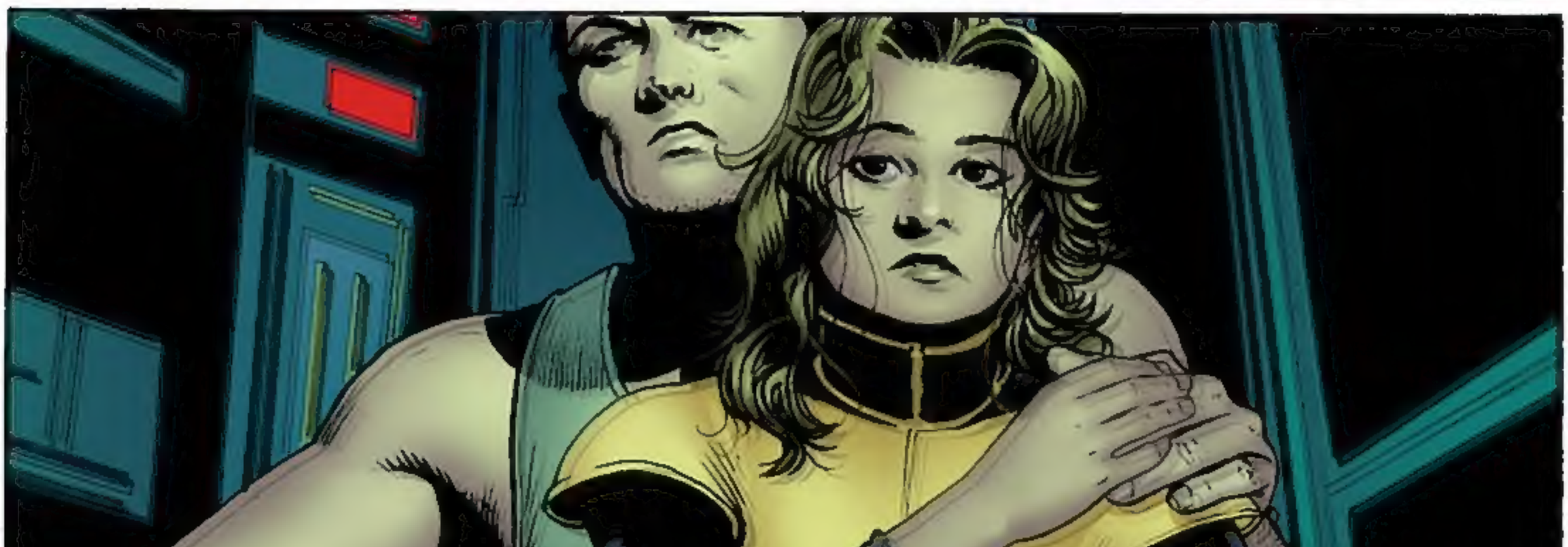
A LOT LESS.

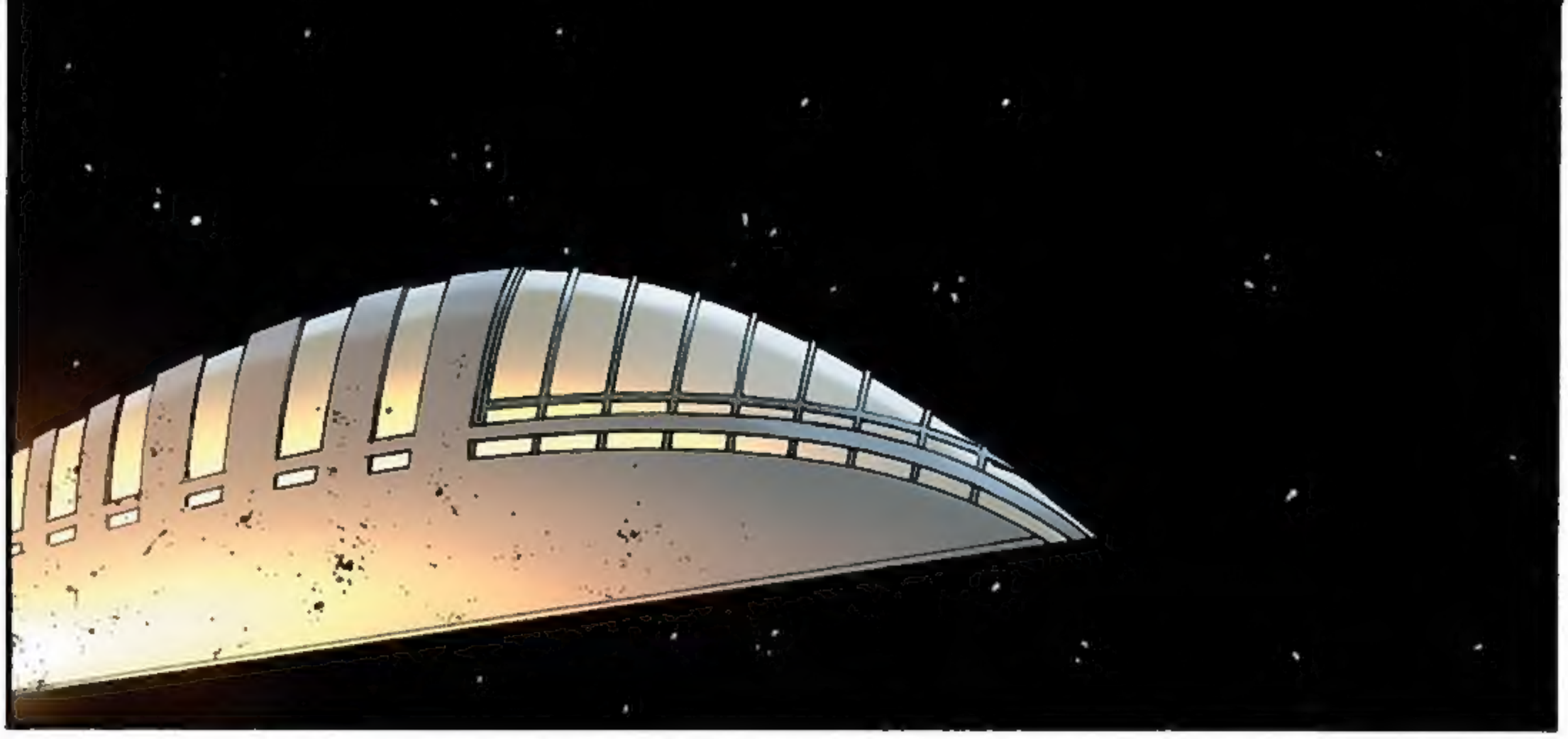
EVERYBODY HANG ON TIGHT.





LET 'ER RIP.





"UNBREACHABLE HULL, PRECISE MANEUVERABILITY, ENOUGH POWER AT SHORT-RANGE TO OUTRUN ANYONE."

PRETTIEST SHIP IN THE FLEET.
NOT TO BE PICKY, AGENT BRAND, BUT IF THIS SPLINTER IS SUCH A WONDERFUL SHIP...

...SHOULDN'T WE BE IN IT?

NO WAY THAT THING LANDS UNDETECTED. BEST THOSE MEN CAN HOPE FOR IS CAPTURE.

YOU TELL THEM THAT?

THEY'RE SOLDIERS. THEY BOUGHT US A FEW MINUTES, AS ORDERED.

LET'S NOT WASTE THEM.

WELL, WE GOT YOUR SIZES RIGHT.

THE BREATHERS GO BEHIND YOUR TEETH. THEY'LL FILTER OUT IMPURITIES, AND THE CAPSULES WILL TIME-RELEASE SUPPLEMENTARY OXYGEN.

EARWIGS WORK AS TRANSLATORS.

WE RENDEZVOUS AT THE GLOWING RED DOT. THE G.P.S. MAPS'LL GUIDE YOU, BUT IF YOU LOSE 'EM, YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ATTUR-HEI.

"PALACE OF THE CORPSE?"

GOOD, IT'S WORKING.

YES, IT'S VERY IMPRESSIVE. PALACE OF THE *CORPSE?*

IT'S A TOMB, GOT DUG UP RECENTLY. OUR SOURCE ON THE BREAKWORLD SAYS IT MIGHT TIE IN TO THE RASPUTIN PROPHECY.

WE HAVE A SOURCE?

WE CAN'T DO ALL THIS NOW.

WE GET ON THE WORLD, WE FIND OUT HOW RASPUTIN'S SUPPOSED TO BE A THREAT, VISIBLY NULLIFY THAT THREAT AND TAKE OUT THE MISSILE THEY'VE GOT POINTED AT THE EARTH.

MORE QUESTIONS WHEN WE'RE ON-WORLD.

MS. PRYDE HAS VERY LONG ARMS.

WHY HAVEN'T YOU KILLED ME?

I SAID WE DON'T HAVE--

IT'S THE SIMPLEST SOLUTION. I BELIEVE YOU ARE A FAN OF THOSE.

PETER...

I DON'T LIKE PROPHECIES. I DON'T LIKE ANYBODY TELLING ME HOW MY LIFE'S GONNA PLAY OUT.

THESE "*AUGURS*" HAVE A PRETTY GOOD TRACK RECORD, THOUGH. THE BREAKWORLDERS BELIEVE YOU'LL DESTROY THEM. THEY THINK THE EARTH IS A THREAT, AND ARE THEREFORE A THREAT TO THE EARTH.

SO WE CONVINCE THEM THE PROPHECY IS WRONG...

...OR WE MAKE DAMN SURE IT COMES TRUE.

TWO BRUTESHIPS ARE CIRCLING BACK. LESS THAN A MINUTE.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

SPLIT 'EM UP.

SO...

...WHICH OF US IS "FLOTSAM"?

STILL READING LIFE-FORMS, COMMANDER.

BELAY KILLSTRIKE.

PREPARE TO BOARD.

KID'S OUT.

HOW YOU RIDIN', KITTEN?

WALK IN THE PARK.

I WORRY... ABOUT THE OTHERS...

IT'S VERY THOUGHTFUL OF YOU, EMMA.

WELL, GOOD LORD, WHY SHOULD WE ENDURE ALL THAT CENTRIFUGAL NONSENSE? TWO LUMPS, DEAR.

WE CAN ALL *"LIVE IN THE NOW"* ONCE WE'RE ON SOLID GROUND.

I JUST WANNA MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT OVERDOING IT, HONEY.

ALSO, IF WE START TO DIE, WE SHOULD PROBABLY KNOW.

WE WON'T DIE.

KID! WAKE UP!

I CAN'T SLOW US DOWN!

DON'T UNPHASE!

HISAKO, DAMMIT...

ARMOR UP!

THE METAL-- LIKE ORD'S SHIP, IT'S...

I CAN'T...

PETER...

DID ANYBODY SEE US?

I CAN'T READ A THING

IF THEY MADE IT, THEY'RE NOWHERE NEAR.

WE'LL GIVE THEM TIME.

IF ANYTHING'S HAPPENED TO THEM, AGENT BRAND--

YOU'LL WHAT? EAT ME?

IN FACT I WILL.

THE NEW MATH, AGENT. YOU'RE OUTNUMBERED. AND NOT WELL-LIKED.

AND I'VE RECENTLY ACQUIRED A TASTE FOR HUMAN FLESH, I SAY WITH SOME EMBARRASSMENT.

STOW THE BICKERING, GUYS...

WE'VE FOUND OUR TOMB.

HE SANK INTO THE EARTH?

AS REPORTED, YES.

HE FELL FROM THE SKY HOLDING A HUMAN GIRL. PEOPLE GATHERED TO SEE AND MOMENTS LATER THEY SANK RIGHT INTO THE EARTH.

WE'RE CERTAIN THIS WAS COLOSSUS?

THE PEOPLE WERE. THEY PANICKED. AND IT SPREADS. THEY BELIEVE HE'S GONE INTO THE EARTH TO INFECT IT.

THAT THE PROPHECY HAS BEGUN.

AND FOR ALL WE KNOW THEY COULD BE RIGHT.

IT DOESN'T FIT EXACTLY, BUT THIS IS NOT AN EXACT SCIENCE. WE COULD HAVE MISINTERPRETED THE ATTUR-HYN.

LET'S HOPE THE PRISONERS HAVE SOMETHING USEFUL TO SAY.

IT'S THE GIRL.

THIS IS HER POWER: TO MOVE THROUGH SOLID OBJECTS. COLOSSUS WILL BE SOMEWHERE ABOVE GROUND. HE CAN BE STOPPED.

BUT NOT BY YOU.

I AM THE ENGINE OF OUR DESTRUCTION. I REQUEST ONLY THAT MY DEATH BE PAINFUL AND PUBLIC.

DOUBT IT NOTHING. YOU DRAW BREATH ONLY AS LONG AS YOU MIGHT BE OF USE.

SYLATIN, WHAT OTHER CAPTIVES HAVE WE?

SEVERAL SOLDIERS FROM THE WRECK OF THEIR SHIP, MOSTLY HUMAN. ONE SYNTHETIC, CLAIMS SHE WAS HELPING ORD.

IMAGINE THAT.

HE NEEDED HELP EVEN TO FAIL.

WHAT OF THE SMALLER VESSEL? DID OUR HUNTERS FIND IT?

A FORCE IS MINUTES AWAY.

IT WAS NO DOUBT A DIVERSION, BUT I WANT THE SOLDIERS CAPTURED ANYWAY. ALL INFORMATION IS VALUABLE, SO ONLY KILL THE NECESSARY EXAMPLES.

I'LL TALK TO THE SYNTHETIC.

START BREAKING THE OTHERS.

FIND THE ENTRANCE.

FIRE ON ANYTHING THAT COMES OUT, BUT REMEMBER WE NEED PRISONERS.

CAPTAIN!

ON MY MARK.

SSSSO... NOT TERRIBLY SSSMART.

FIRST GOOD NEWS ALL DAY.

WHAT IS NEXT?

WE REMOVE TO SITE 8, OUTSIDE THE CITY. WAIT FOR AN ORDER AND HOPE SOMEONE'S ALIVE TO GIVE IT.

IF YOU CAN THINK AT THIS LITTLE GUY, GET HIM TO FLY RECON...

GUESS HE UNDERSTOOD.

HE IS BONDED WITH THE X-GIRL. HE WILL DO WHAT IT TAKESSS TO PROTECT HER.

YEAH? YOU'RE THE PSYCHIC, I GUESS.

LOGAN?

TO A GRUNT'S EYE, LOOKS LIKE HE'S WORKIN' AWFUL HARD TO AVOID HER.

YOU'RE NOT READY TO SEE ME, KID.

I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD BE STAYING IN ONE PLACE. WE'RE NOT FAR ENOUGH FROM THE CRASH TO BE SURE...

THAT ARMOR'S PRETTY DAMN IMPRESSIVE. HIT THE GROUND WITHOUT A SCRATCH.

CAN'T SAY THE SAME FOR MY FACE.

ANOTHER HALF-HOUR, I SHOULD HAVE SOMETHING RESEMBLING A NOSE. AND SOME TENDONS. THEN WE MOVE.

I HAVE A TEST ON WEDNESDAY.

I'M NOT AN X-MAN, I SHOULDN'T...I MEAN I CAN'T--

I HAVE A CHEMISTRY TEST.

TAKE OFF THE SUIT.

THAT'S NOT REALLY AN OPTION.

YOU WANNA CRY ON MY BUBBLING, SKINLESS SHOULDER? YOU'RE IN THAT SUIT 'CAUSE YOU'RE AN X-MAN. YOU'RE AN X-MAN 'CAUSE I SEEN YOU FIGHT AND I WANT YOU ON THE TEAM.

BUT IF I'M WRONG, IF YOU'RE JUST A WHINING TEENAGER GONNA FREAK OUT ON A HOSTILE ALIEN PLANET AND COST ME TIME, THEN LOSE THE SUIT AND GO DIE.

WE GOT WORLDS TO SAVE.

"ARMOR".

"ARMOR". HUNH.

IS IT TAKEN?

I DON'T THINK SO. IT'LL WORK FOR A NAME.

KINDA ON THE NOSE...

WELL IT GETS TO THE POINT.

YEAH, IT'S VERY DIRECT --I'M THINKING OF CALLING MYSELF "CLAWS".

NOT "STENCH"?

SHUT UP AND LET ME HEAL.

TELL YOU WHAT: YOU GO ONE DAY WITHOUT STABBING ME, YOU GET TO CHOOSE MY NAME.

I'M GONNA CHECK THE STREET.

NOBODY HEARD.

GOD...WHAT IS THIS WORLD MADE OF?

PETE?

PETER, WE HAVE TO KEEP MOVING.

TO WHAT?

TO THE TOMB, THE ATTUR-HEI PLACE. SEE WHAT THEY DUG UP--

AND THEN? REGROUP, MAKE PLAN, COMMIT GENOCIDE, GO HOME?

NO.

PETE, NO. WE'RE NOT FALLING FOR THAT.

THESE PEOPLE READ THE FUTURE.

THEY SEE ME DESTROYING THEM. AND THE AGENT, BRAND, SHE AS MUCH AS TELLS ME TO.

AND THE DAY WE TAKE ORDERS FROM HER IS THE--

I WAS MILLIONS OF MILES AWAY, KATYA. AND DEAD.

AND NOW?

WE WILL FIND ANOTHER WAY.

"THERE'S NO SET FUTURE, PETER. I KNOW THAT AS WELL AS ANYONE.

"JUST BECAUSE THEY SAY YOU'RE A DANGER TO THIS WORLD..."

"...DOESN'T MEAN IT'S WRITTEN IN STONE."

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EMPIRE